

GOOD NEIGHBORLY NEWS

ISSUE 4

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PUBLICATION

WINTER - 2008

Neighborhood Watch Block Captains:

Please distribute this newsletter to your block participants.

Don't forget to sign up for e-mailed crime alerts. To register, e-mail me at jsasw@ci.carlsbad.ca.us and get details.

Editor-Jodee Sasway
Crime Prevention Spec.
(760) 931-2105
jsasw@ci.carlsbad.ca.us

Police Contacts:

Website
www.carlsbadca.gov

Emergency
9 1 1

Non-emergency
(760) 931-2197

Crime Statistic Hotline
(760) 931-2201

Other Crime Statistics
(760) 931-2279

Police Watch Commander
(760) 931-2115

Traffic Unit
(760) 931-2106

Narcotics Unit
(760) 931-2195

Records Division
(760) 931-2119

Detective Division
(760) 931-2145

Community Services
(760) 931-2177

The Crime Prevention Unit's Mission is the anticipation, recognition and appraisal of crime risk and the initiation of some action to remove or reduce it.

Let's do it together!

Your Social Security Number: Controlling Identity Theft

Originally, your Social Security number (SSN) was a way for the government to track your earnings and pay you retirement benefits. But over the years, it has become much more than that. It is the key to a lot of your personal information. With your SSN, an identity thief can get your credit history, your bank account, your charge accounts, and your utility accounts. A thief can also use the number to open new credit and bank accounts or to get a driver's license—all using your identity.

Don't carry your Social Security card in your wallet. You don't need to have your Social Security card with you at all times. Keep it at home in a safe place. Check for other cards that may have your SSN on them.



Ask questions when asked for your Social Security number. There is no law that prevents businesses from asking for your SSN. And you may be denied service if you don't give the number. Ask if you can show another form of identification. Or ask if the business can use another number as your customer number.

Remember that some government agencies can require your SSN. These agencies include DMV, welfare offices, and tax agencies. Look for the required "disclosure" form. The form should state if giving the number is required or optional, how it will be used, and the agency's legal authority to ask for it. California law limits the public display of Social Security



numbers. A California law bars many organizations from publicly displaying SSNs. The law applies to businesses, government and other entities and prohibits:

1. Printing SSNs on ID cards or badges;

2. Printing SSNs on documents mailed to customers, unless the law requires it or the document is a form or application;

3. Printing SSNs on postcards or any other mailer where its visible without opening an envelope;

4. Avoiding legal requirements by encoding or embedding SSNs in cards or documents, such as using a bar code, chip or magnetic strip;

5. Requiring people to send SSNs over the Internet, unless the connection is secure or the number is encrypted;

6. Requiring people to use an SSN to log onto a web site, unless a password is also used.

Make sure the companies you do business with are in compliance with the regulations.

If your identity is stolen:

Getting a new Social Security number is probably not a good idea. Victims of identity theft sometimes want to change their Social Security number. The Social Security Administration very rarely allows this. In fact, there are drawbacks to changing your number.

It could result in losing your credit history, your academic records, and your professional degrees. The absence of any credit history under the new SSN would make it difficult for you to get credit, rent an apartment, or open a bank account.



Safety for Joggers and Walkers



Being out and about on a warm sunny day is fabulous but be cautious and don't become so preoccupied that you fail to pay attention to what is going on around you.

Follow these safety tips and reduce the risk of becoming a victim of a crime.

- Let someone know where you are going and when to expect you back.
- Jog or walk with a friend and vary your route.
- Jog or walk in a familiar area; avoid heavily wooded, poorly lighted or secluded areas especially after dark.
- Wear bright clothing so people can see you.
- Be aware of your surroundings; avoid wearing earphones that prevent you from hearing what is going on around you.
- Be alert, walk with authority, look ahead and scan your surroundings.
- Be cautious of strangers that try to engage you in conversation.
- If you think you are being followed go to the nearest area with activity and seek help.
- Carry a cell phone for emergencies; avoid talking on the phone while walking as criminals prey on people that are distracted.

Social Security Number (cont.)

Here is more information on Social Security number theft prevention.

- Identity Theft: If you think an identity thief is using your SSN, call the Social Security Fraud Hotline at 1-800-269-0271.
- If you think someone is using your SSN to work, check your Social Security Personal Earnings and Benefit Statement. You can get a copy by calling 1-800-772-1213, or online at www.ssa.gov/online/ssa-7004.pdf.
- Check out the Social Security Administration's booklet "When Someone Misuses Your Number," available at www.ssa.gov/pubs/10064.html.
- Look for the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse "Fact Sheet 10- My Social Security Number: How Secure Is It?", available at www.privacyrights.org/fs/fs10-ssn.htm.

This is just one way a thief steals your identity. For more information on fraud and identity theft, go to the City of Carlsbad's website at: www.carlsbadca.gov/police/cpfraud.html.

ATM Safety

When going to an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) it is important to think about your personal safety. The first step is to use the ATM during normal business hours.

Next, look before you leap. Before approaching any ATM, be alert for any suspicious persons, occupied vehicles or odd circumstances. Should you observe suspicious persons or circumstances, or otherwise feel uncomfortable with your surroundings, leave the area and do not use the ATM. Come back at a later time or use an ATM at another location. You should immediately report any suspicious persons or activity to the police.



Be prepared. Before approaching any ATM, have your access card and any other paperwork necessary for your particular transaction ready and in your hand. Having to retrieve these items from a purse or wallet is time consuming and allows a potential offender easier access to you. By being ready to transact business before approaching the ATM, your transaction becomes quicker and safer.

Always be on guard. While transacting business at the ATM, stand in such a way that you can continually observe your surroundings.

Be careful not to disclose or otherwise reveal your Personal Identification Number ("PIN") to others. Never begin a transaction when strangers are too close or have a clear view of the ATM keyboard. Shield the ATM keyboard as you access the machine. This will allow you to access the machine without disclosing or revealing your PIN.

Should you observe any suspicious persons or circumstances, terminate your transaction immediately, leave the area, and contact the police.

When done, don't dawdle. Complete your transaction, retrieve your card, and don't forget your receipt. Immediately leave the area. Do not count or otherwise expose the money you received from the ATM. Continue to watch for anyone following or approaching you. Always maintain a safe distance between you and any stranger. If you believe that you are being followed, go to the nearest place where there are lots of people and contact the police.

If you are at a drive up ATM and a suspicious person approaches your vehicle, immediately drive away and call the police. Don't worry about getting your card out of the machine, it's not worth getting robbed or hurt. Your money is replaceable, your life isn't.

